

36.11.440 SENSITIVE SPECIES - FISHER (1) The department shall assess fisher habitat on projects that contain preferred fisher cover types for lands administered by the department's northwest land office and southwest land office. When conducting forest management activities, the department shall consider the following as consistent with 77-5-301 and 77-5-302, MCA:

(a) In blocked areas within the Stillwater, Swan River, and Coal Creek state forests, the department shall use the grizzly bear BMU sub-unit as the unit of analysis. In all other areas, the department shall determine the unit of analysis at the project level.

(b) When managing within preferred fisher cover types that are within 100 feet of class 1 streams or within 50 feet of class 2 streams:

(i) The department shall manage 75% of the acreage (trust lands only) to be in the sawtimber size class in moderate to well-stocked density. The department shall postpone treatments where this cannot be accomplished.

(A) Where treatments reduce stand density below moderately stocked levels, the department shall make efforts to provide forest connectivity along the opposite stream bank.

(ii) The department shall define a minimum of one buffered management zone connecting to other fisher habitat through sites where individual perennial and intermittent stream courses are difficult to define (e.g., braided with many channels).

(iii) The department shall retain large snags, snag recruits and CWD pursuant to ARM 36.11.409 through 36.11.414. The department shall promote recruitment if existing abundances are below expected levels. Following large-scale stand replacement disturbance events in preferred fisher cover types, the department shall give consideration to maintaining an abundance of large snags and CWD within 100 feet of class 1 streams and 50 feet of class 2 streams.

(iv) When practicable, the department shall avoid constructing new roads in preferred fisher cover types within 100 feet of class 1 streams or 50 feet of class 2 streams. Where feasible, the department shall incorporate use of temporary roads, and obstruct or obliterate unnecessary existing roads.

(c) The department shall manage for at least one forested patch providing connectivity between adjacent third order drainages, preferably in saddles, where landscape conditions allow.

(d) The department shall consider importance of late-successional riparian and upland forest in meeting the life requisites of fishers. (History: 77-1-202, 77-1-209, 77-5-201, 77-5-204, MCA; IMP, 77-5-116, 77-5-204, 77-5-206, 77-5-207, MCA; NEW, 2003 MAR p. 397, Eff. 3/14/03.)